

WTOP Radio

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PROGRAM WTOP Editorial

COMMANDS LASTING RESPECT

JACK JUREY: "The resignation of Allen Dulles as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency rates more than just passing mention. Mr. Dulles has served his country well for upwards of half a century; much of that time has been spent in the delicate and unpublicized business of spying. A great deal of what Mr. Dulles achieved will never be known unless some historian in the distant future writes a history of espionage in the 20th century. Yet it's clearly evident that Mr. Dulles rendered valuable service to the United States under seven presidents. He brought to many difficult assignments a combination of ability, discretion and devotion to the national interest. President Kennedy recognized these qualities when he went to CIA headquarters this week to present Mr. Dulles with the National Security Medal. "I know of no man", the President said, "who brings a greater sense of personal commitment to his work."

"As Mr. Dulles leaves office, it ought to be said also that the CIA under his direction probably got something of a bum rap on a couple of occasions. One was the U-2 flight in the spring of 1960; the timing of that flight on the eve of Paris summit meeting was a blunder. However, the entire U-2 program extending over a period of several years seems to have been a brilliant effort. More recently CIA got a lot of blame for the Cuban fiasco. It now appears that the Agency made a botch of its intelligence estimates of the Cuban situation. It is equally true that the blame for the Cuban operation was spread throughout all the top levels of government. Although Mr. Dulles offered to take all the responsibility on his own shoulders, the President rightly refused to make him the scapegoat for what in fact a general failure of policy.

"The CIA will continue to be a controversial agency. But Mr. Dulles, as he turns the reins over to John McCone, deserves to be told that he has handled one of the most difficult jobs in the government in a manner to command lasting respect."